

REMARKS

Claims 1 – 10 remain in this application. Claims 16 – 20 have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 10, 11, and 13 have been amended. Reconsideration of this application in view of the amendments noted is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitation that the first sheet-like member comprises a single layer, and to include the limitation from claim 2 that the separation line extends from one edge of the first sheet-like member to another edge of the first sheet-like member. Claim 11 has been amended to include the limitation that the first sheet-like member comprises a single layer. Support for the first sheet-like member comprising a single layer may be found in Figures 1 – 4 of the drawings as described in the specification.

In the Office Action, claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, the phrase “said first sheet-like” in claim 6 was found to lack antecedent basis. Applicant has amended claims 1, 4, 5, 10, 11, and 13 so that a “sheet-like member” is referred to as a “first sheet-like member.” There is now antecedent basis for “said first sheet-like” member in claim 6. Referring to the first-introduced sheet-like member as a first sheet-like member is also consistent with the introduction of a second sheet-like member in claims 6 and 14.

Claims 1, 3 – 4, 6, 10 – 11, and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ueki (U.S. Patent No. 6,635,326). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Ueki fails to disclose a single layer sheet-like member having an upper surface and an adhesive lower surface, as claim 1 requires. Instead, Ueki's sheet must always have at least two layers. In the first embodiment of Ueki, the sheet has two layers including a printing paper layer 11 and a polyethylene film base layer 12 laminated on the printing paper. The bottom surface of the base layer 12 has an adhesive thereon. In the second embodiment of Ueki, the sheet has four layers including a printing paper layer 25,

two polyethylene film layers 26, 27 having differing adhesions, and a base layer 22. The bottom surface of the base layer 12 has an adhesive thereon.

Ueki also fails to disclose a separation line extending from one edge of the sheet-like member to another edge of the sheet-like member, as claim 1 requires. Instead, the cut line 16 in Ueki is within the edges of the sheet and is also a closed loop. The cut line 16 does not begin or end at an edge of the sheet.

Furthermore, Ueki fails to disclose a second sheet-like member having an upper surface and an adhesive lower surface, the upper surface releasably contacting the first sheet-like member adhesive lower surface, as claim 6 requires. Ueki does not include more than one layer having an adhesive surface. In Ueki, there is only one layer (the base layer) that has an adhesive surface.

Moreover, Ueki fails to disclose that one segment of the sheet-like member has a permanent adhesive on the adhesive lower surface, as claim 10 requires. There is no teaching in Ueki of using a permanent adhesive. Nor is there any teaching that a separable segment of the sheet has a lower strength adhesive lower surface than a remainder segment of the sheet having a permanent adhesive lower surface.

For these reasons, claim 1 is patentable over Ueki. Claims 2 – 10, depending directly or indirectly from claim 1, are also patentable over Ueki. Claims 6 and 10 are also separately patentable over Ueki for the reasons stated above.

With respect to claim 11, similar to the argument made with respect to claim 1, Ueki fails to disclose a single layer sheet-like member having an upper surface and an adhesive lower surface, as claim 11 requires. Applicant incorporates by reference the arguments made above in regards to this limitation in claim 1.

With respect to claim 14, similar to the argument made with respect to claim 6, Ueki fails to disclose a second sheet-like member having an upper surface and an adhesive lower surface, the upper surface releasably contacting the first sheet-like member adhesive lower surface, as claim 14 requires. Applicant incorporates by reference the arguments made above in regards to this limitation in claim 6.

For these reasons, claim 11 is patentable over Ueki. Claims 12 – 15, depending directly from claim 11, are also patentable over Ueki. Claim 14 is also separately patentable over Ueki for the reasons stated above.

Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Section 102(e) rejection of claims 1, 3 – 4, 6, 10 – 11, and 14 as anticipated by Ueki be withdrawn.

Claims 1 – 4, 10 – 13, and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by St. Aubin (U.S. Patent No. 4,309,468). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. St. Aubin fails to disclose a separation line extending from one edge of the sheet-like member to another edge of the sheet-like member. Instead, in St. Aubin the line of weakening 28 extends from one edge (free side edge 23) back to the same edge 23.

Further, St. Aubin fails to disclose that the separation line is sinusoidal, as claim 2 requires. Instead, the line of weakening 28 in St. Aubin is formed of a leading portion 30 and a trailing portion 31 that are at an angle to each other and form two sides of an equilateral triangle (see column 3, lines 19 – 21).

Moreover, St. Aubin fails to disclose that the separation line is a cut line, as claim 3 requires. Instead, the line of weakening 28 in St. Aubin is formed by cuts separated by frangible lands 35, 35'. Hence, the line of weakening 28 is a perforated line rather than a cut line.

For these reasons, claim 1 is patentable over St. Aubin. Claims 2 – 10, depending directly or indirectly from claim 1, are also patentable over St. Aubin. Further, claims 2 and 3 are separately patentable over St. Aubin for the reasons stated above.

With respect to claim 11, St. Aubin fails to disclose a sheet-like member comprising a plurality of remainder segments and at least one removable segment that is separable from the remainder segments to render indicia printed on an upper surface of the sheet-like member illegible, as claim 11 requires. Instead, in St. Aubin, there is only one remainder segment (separable section 29). Further, the rest of the label is removed from the sole separable section 29 to render indicia on the upper surface illegible.

Furthermore, St. Aubin fails to disclose remainder segments having a two-dimensional shape chosen from a group of circles, squares, diamonds, octagons, dagger shapes, saw tooth shapes, and island shapes, as claim 12 requires. Instead, the remainder segment in St. Aubin is an equilateral triangle (see column 3, lines 19 - 21).

For these reasons, claim 11 is patentable over St. Aubin. Claims 12 - 15, depending directly from claim 11, are also patentable over St. Aubin. Claim 12 is also separately patentable over St. Aubin for the reasons stated above.

Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Section 102(b) rejection of claims 1 - 4, 10 - 13, and 15 as anticipated by St. Aubin be withdrawn.

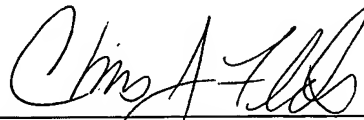
Claims 5 and 7 - 9 were rejected under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ueki in view of Edwards (U.S. Patent No. 5,895,075). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Claims 5 and 7 - 9 depend indirectly from claim 1. As argued above, claim 1 is patentable over Ueki. Therefore, claims 5 and 7 - 9 are also patentable over Ueki, and further over any combination of Ueki with Edwards. Hence, applicant respectfully requests that the Section 103(a) rejection of claims 5 and 7 - 9 over Ueki in view of Edwards be withdrawn.

This amendment and request for reconsideration is felt to be fully responsive to the comments and suggestions of the examiner and to place this application in condition for allowance. Favorable action is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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